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THE FOUNDATION OF OPERATIONAL ART  
IN  
THE NAVAL SERVICE

by

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Seminar 3

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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this requirement, is the need to continue to maintain control of the seas. And finally, it should be understood that naval forces will most likely be employed as a component of a joint/combined force. Naval leaders of the future will have to fight smarter with less. To accomplish that, those leaders need to become masters of operational art. And key to being able to master operational art, is having a sound knowledge and understanding of its fundamentals.

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**Abstract of  
THE FOUNDATION OF OPERATIONAL ART  
IN  
THE NAVAL SERVICE**

**This paper examines the underlying components that construct the basis for the employment of operational art within the Naval Service. The primary objective of the paper was to gain a better understanding of naval operational art by achieving a more comprehensive knowledge of its foundation which is formed by a triad of the Naval Service's vision, doctrine and practice. Each element is examined from an historical and current operational perspective. Particular emphasis is placed upon how each of these elements shape the way the Navy and Marine Corps support national security objectives and/or a CINC's regional peacetime and wartime campaign plans.**

**The paper also attempts to provide some insight as to where the Naval Service needs to focus regarding its future. Vision must provide the direction for determining the operational capabilities that the Naval Service must maintain or acquire. Doctrine must provide the means for translating the vision into practice and for ensuring that there is a common basis for action. The practice of naval warfare needs to focus on joint operations in the littoral regions, but implicit in this requirement, is the need to continue to maintain control of the seas. And finally, it should be understood that naval forces will most likely be employed as a component of a joint/combined force.**

**Naval leaders of the future will have to fight smarter with less. To accomplish that, those leaders need to become masters of operational art. And, key to mastering operational art, is having a sound knowledge and understanding of its foundation.**

## **PREFACE**

**The primary objective of this paper was to gain a better understanding and knowledge of the basis for operational art in the Naval Service.<sup>1</sup> The methodology pursued was one that examined the foundation of naval operational art vis-a-vis the service's vision, doctrine and practice.**

**Much has been written on the current vision "...From the Sea", but for the most part, the current writings are merely recaps of the basic White Paper and say the same thing. Current writings on naval doctrine were conspicuously scarce and indicative of the past interest and priority that this subject has enjoyed in the Naval Service. And while there is much written on the practice and employment of naval forces, the majority of these writings tend to focus on the tactical level.**

**The constructs of vision, doctrine and practice were examined in terms of both their historical and current basis. The intended purpose of this was to acquire an understanding, in terms of operational art, of where the Navy and Marine Corps have been, where they are currently headed, and hopefully, where they need to be.**

**Diminishing resources and the complexities of the modern battlefield require leaders who can fight smart with less. Those type of leaders will be ones who master the employment of operational art. Implicit in mastering operational art is understanding the foundation on which it is based.**

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**<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper, "Naval Service" is used as the collective term for the two separate services within the Department of the Navy, the Navy and the Marine Corps.**

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# **THE FOUNDATION OF OPERATIONAL ART IN THE NAVAL SERVICE**

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Warfare has continually evolved throughout the ages. In its early form it can best be described as tribal melees where combat quickly degenerated into a series of individual fights. The political objectives for going to war would often be decided, one way or the other, in a single engagement or battle. The masters of warfare in these ancient societies were, for the most part, those who possessed the requisite physical courage and skill of arms. Today, warfare is much more complex. Seldom will a nation achieve its political objectives in a single, decisive battle. The magnitude and scope of modern warfare is such that a conflict may well encompass more than one theater of war or operations and the focus will be on campaigns rather than individual battles and engagements. And, the masters of modern warfare are those who understand and are able to effectively employ operational art.

Operational art is not a new concept in warfighting. It encompasses both the theory and practice of planning, executing, and sustaining major operations and campaigns. It was in the age of Napoleon, when the scope of warfare so dramatically increased, that the roots of operational art began to take hold. And it truly came of age, out of necessity, during World War II. Operational art provides the linkage between military art at the strategic and tactical levels of war.

Despite its historical basis, operational art is still not a well understood concept within the Naval Service. Some believe it to be a land warfare term that has been

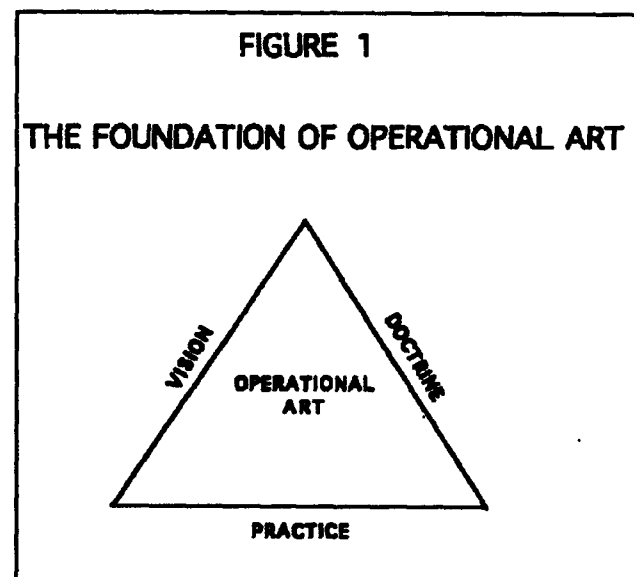


imposed upon the sea services for the sake of jointness. In fact, however, the Naval Service's success in World War II reflects the effective employment of operational art. For example, the campaigns undertaken by the Navy and Marine Corps during World War II in the Pacific Oceans Areas (POA) provide an excellent model of operational art when viewed in the context of today's definition:

**The employment of military forces to attain strategic or operational objectives through the design, organization, integration and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles. Operational art translates the joint force commander's strategy into operational design, and ultimately, tactical action, by integrating the key activities of all levels of war.<sup>1</sup>**

The complexities of joint warfare requires the effective employment of operational art to successfully execute a CINC's campaign plan. The concept of operational art is subscribed to by all of the services. But this does not mean that each of the services employ operational art in exactly the same manner. Each service attempts to provide a foundation for their concept of operational art that will maximize their warfighting capabilities and contributions.

A service's approach to operational art can be viewed as a foundation of its vision, doctrine and practice.<sup>2</sup> (See Figure 1.) These three components form an interrelated triad that continually shape and redefine how a service plans, executes and sustains its



**warfighting capabilities.**

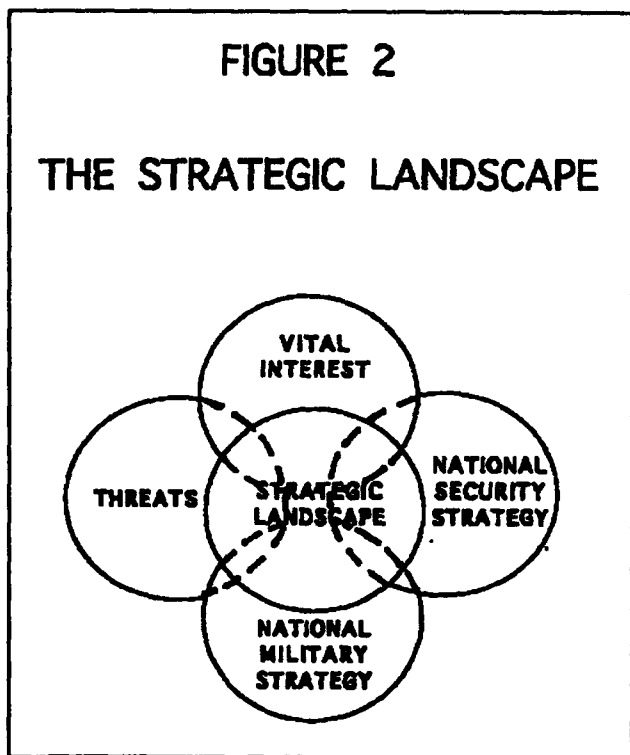
**The challenges that will face the Naval Service in the future will have to be met with diminishing resources. To be successful on the modern battlefield, naval leaders will have to continually fight smarter. Critical to fighting smarter is being able to effectively employ operational art. And to effectively employ operational art, its basic underpinnings of vision, doctrine and practice must be understood.**

## CHAPTER II

### THE STRATEGIC LANDSCAPE

With the end of the Cold War, the United States has emerged as the preeminent power in a new multipolar world. Gone is the clearly defined threat of global nuclear confrontation and war on the plains of Europe with the former Soviet Union. What has emerged in its place is a world where there is no clearly defined threat, but rather an amorphous set of emerging dangers that challenge stability in vital regions. Not since the end of World War II has the United States faced a more dynamic and radical national security environment. Additionally, domestic realities also significantly impact the amount of resources that will be available to meet the security challenges of the future. If the Naval Service is to remain viable in this dynamic security milieu, it must adapt its approach to operational art.

What shapes the strategic landscape is a combination of the Nation's enduring vital interests, the threats to these vital interests, the overarching National Security Strategy that sets the strategic direction, and the supporting National Military Strategy. (See Figure 2.) These four, in a continually changing and shifting interrelationship, provide the framework



**against which the foundation of operational art must be crafted.**

**The cornerstone of that framework are the Nation's basic national security interests and objectives. They include:**

- ◆ The survival of the United States as a free and independent nation, with its fundamental values intact and its institution and people secure.**
- ◆ A healthy and growing US economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.**
- ◆ Healthy, cooperative and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.**
- ◆ A stable and secure world, where political, and economic freedom, human rights, and democratic institutions flourish.<sup>3</sup>**

**These four broad and enduring objectives provide the strategic direction that the Nation follows in meeting the evolving threats that challenge peace and prosperity.**

**The threat has clearly shifted from a global one to one that is regionally oriented. This necessitates a shift in focus from preparations for global war to adaptive and flexible capabilities that will allow the Nation to handle the unknown and uncertain regional threats of the future. Being unprepared or unable to meet a crisis or war that no one predicts or expects will be the key vulnerability of the future.**

**President Clinton and his national security advisors have articulated that the strategy that the United States will pursue, in this multipolar world, is one of "enlargement". The three pillars of this strategy of enlargement, and the basis of the Nation's current foreign policy, are:**

- ◆ Ensuring national security;**
- ◆ Stimulating US economic growth; and,**

◆ Promoting democracy.<sup>4</sup>

While broad and encompassing, these three pillars provide the overarching structure that the National Military Strategy (NMS) must support.

The current NMS is regionally oriented and based upon the four elements of:

- ◆ Strategic deterrence and defense;
- ◆ Forward presence;
- ◆ Crisis response; and,
- ◆ Reconstitution.<sup>5</sup>

This approach represents a flexible and diverse strategy that is designed to ensure the US military's ability, when called upon, to demonstrate US resolve and commitment and, when necessary, to fight and win.

The underlying themes outlined above, reflect both dramatic change and an uncertain future. The ways and means of the past will not necessarily meet the ends of the future. To remain viable, today's Naval Service must have a vision that clearly charts a new direction and focus.

## **CHAPTER III**

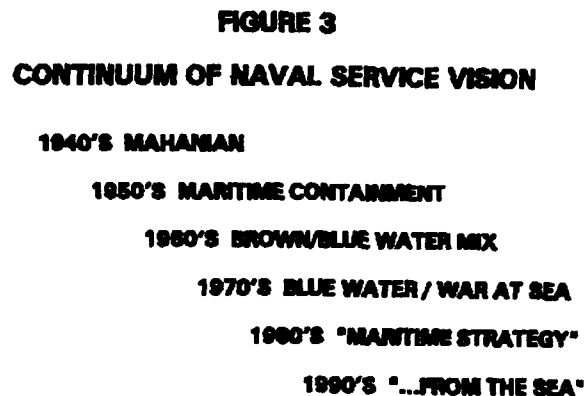
### **THE VISION**

It is today that we must prepare for the challenges of tomorrow. This would be a complex task even if the conditions of tomorrow were known with certainty. Given that the only things certain about the future are that there will be fewer resources available to the military and the future will continue to be uncertain, this task is even more daunting. What is required is a vision, an "intelligent foresight"<sup>6</sup>, that embraces the dynamic environment in which the Naval Service must operate, and provides the direction necessary to meet the challenges of an uncertain future.

The concept of a vision to guide the Naval Service is not new. Throughout the second half of this century, the Navy and Marine Corps have subscribed to, and articulated, several different visions. Since the 1940's, the continuum of Naval Service vision has evolved from one that was clearly Mahanian to one that is definitely not Mahanian. (See Figure 3.)

In September 1992, the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations and Commandant of the Marine Corps signed and released the White Paper "...From the Sea". This document

represents the latest vision of the Naval Service. It is intended to chart the course for Navy and Marine Corps contributions to national military capabilities into the 21st



century and to focus naval capabilities towards the mainstream of joint operations.<sup>7</sup>

There is no doubt that "...From the Sea" is a significant departure from the vision outlined in its predecessor vision "The Maritime Strategy". Criticisms have been levied that this new direction dangerously abandons the sea services' traditional role of control of the seas for a temporal joint trend of regional and littoral focus. But this significant change in focus is reflective of the security environment in which the Naval Service must now operate. Additionally, implicit in the ability to conduct littoral warfare, remains the capability to control the seas.

What this new vision means to the Naval Service is a fundamental shift away from open-ocean warfighting on the sea toward joint operations conducted from the sea.<sup>8</sup> This shift emphasizes the expeditionary nature of the Navy and Marine Corps team. The expeditionary concept is based on forces that are designed to operate forward and to respond swiftly.<sup>9</sup> Further, the lessons of World War II which were revalidated in the Persian Gulf War, indicate that the modern battlefield is multidimensional and synergy will be the key to success. Therefore, while remaining focused on a maritime environment, naval forces must be fully interoperable and capable of supporting a CINC's operations or campaign plans as part of an integrated joint team.

What this new vision means to the National Command Authorities (NCA) and the CINCs is that the Naval Service will provide forces that are tailored for national needs. This requires forces that are mobile, flexible, versatile and sustainable and capable of responding immediately to the CINCs as they execute national policy. This implies a

**capability to act as an initial "enabling" capability of a joint force, as well as Navy and Marine Corps components in sustained joint operations.**

**The Naval Service's future depends upon the contributions it can make towards joint warfighting. The Naval Service of the future must not only be able to control the seas, but also must be able to project power ashore. This means concentrating on littoral warfare and operational maneuver from the sea. The vision "...From the Sea" provides the direction, but its successful implementation depends upon the doctrinal development of the integrated tactical techniques and procedures associated with the critical operational capabilities of command, control, and surveillance, battlespace dominance, power projection, and force sustainment.<sup>10</sup> Vision and doctrine together provide the theory and this theory in combination with practice represent the basic components of operational art.<sup>11</sup>**



## **CHAPTER IV**

### **THE DOCTRINE**

Doctrine is defined as "Fundamental principles by which the military forces or elements thereof guide their actions in support of national objectives. It is authoritative but requires judgement in application."<sup>12</sup> Doctrine delineates a service's tactics, techniques and procedures. One must have a solid understanding of these to employ operational art and fight smart. Doctrine is the critical link necessary to translate a service's vision into successful practice; understanding it is essential to being able to effectively employ operational art.

Formal doctrine, however, has traditionally been a weak link in the foundation of operational art in the Naval Service. Some believe that doctrine robs the commander of initiative and flexibility and that the Naval Service has been very successful without much ado regarding doctrine. Additionally, there is a mistaken perception that the Naval Service's recent emphasis on doctrinal development is something new. But, in fact, both formal and informal doctrine has had a significant impact on the Naval Service throughout this century. For example, Lieutenant Commander Dudley Knox wrote in 1915:

... the American military as a whole are unfamiliar with the meaning of the term "doctrine" when used in its purely military sense, and fail to comprehend its importance as well as its role in bringing about timely and united action in the midst of hostilities. ...The object of military doctrine is to furnish the basis for prompt and harmonious conduct ... More concisely stated the object is to provide a foundation for mutual understanding between the various commanders during hostile operations.<sup>13</sup>

By 1919, the Joint Board of Aeronautics, an offshoot of the Army-Navy Joint Board,

issued its first doctrinal statement on air warfare. This document, among other things, stressed the importance of air operations in supporting major operations at sea and provided the initial focus for the development of associated carrier tactics, techniques and procedures. By 1934, the Marine Corps produced the Tentative Manual for Landing Operations which was the cornerstone for the development of amphibious tactics, techniques and procedures.<sup>14</sup> The Naval Service's success in the POA campaigns were, in large measure, directly attributable to these pre-World War II doctrinal efforts.

The Naval Service has always had doctrine; it is just that it has not always been well disseminated and consequently not universally understood. As the Naval Service shifts its focus from open ocean warfighting to the conduct of littoral warfare, the requirement for understanding and promulgating naval doctrine will be even greater. The conduct of littoral warfare means that, in the future, the Naval Service will always fight as part of a joint force and it is essential that there be a common doctrinal basis among the joint force components if the CINC's campaign plan is going to be successfully executed.

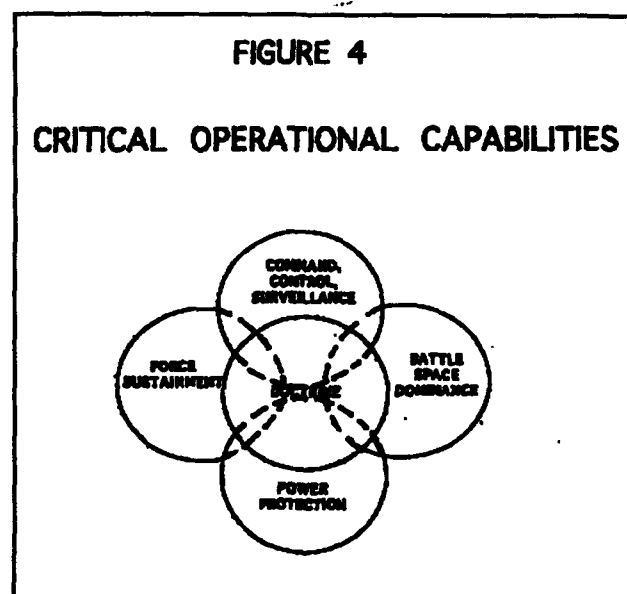
In an effort to significantly strengthen the development of doctrine in the Naval Service, the Naval Doctrine Command was established at Norfolk, Virginia in March 1993. This organization has the responsibility for translating the strategic vision of "...From the Sea" into doctrine and for providing the coordinated Navy-Marine Corps voice in joint and combined doctrine development.<sup>15</sup>

As a first effort, the Naval Doctrine Command published Naval Doctrine

**Publication 1 (NDP 1) Naval Warfare.** This document is intended to be the capstone document that will provide the direction for all future doctrinal development within the Navy and Marine Corps. It is the service equivalent of The Army's FM 100-5, Operations, and the Air Force's AFM 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force. This capstone document will be followed by a series of five doctrinal publications that will be functionally oriented and will provide the doctrinal basis for conducting naval warfare.<sup>16</sup>

"...From the Sea " identified four critical operational capabilities that would be required to successfully conduct naval warfare under the new vision. Doctrine is the overarching concept that will provide the vehicle for tying those four critical operational capabilities into a cohesive warfighting approach and translating their associated tactics, techniques and procedures into practice. (See Figure 4.) Accordingly, while functionally oriented, the development and refinement of those operational capabilities must address a number of basic issues.

Command, control, and surveillance are supporting functions that are essential for success. Doctrine must ensure that they are structured to promote efficient joint and combined operations by providing a seamless, interoperable command and control network.



**Surveillance efforts must provide the commander immediate access to all source information and should emphasize the exploitation of space and electronic warfare.**

**Battlespace dominance is the heart of naval warfare. Doctrine must emphasize a multi-dimensional, sea-air-land, approach. This approach must ensure the ability of naval forces to bring decisive power to bear on and below the sea, on land and in the air. Implicit in this capability, remains control of the seas to both ensure a joint force's access to a region as well as to deny an adversary's access. This means being able to dominate the battlespace which in turn means being able to effectively transition from open ocean to littoral areas, and from sea to land and back.<sup>17</sup>**

**Power projection means operational maneuver from the sea (OMFTS). Doctrine must relate that OMFTS is the naval warfare equivalent of maneuver warfare. It particularly encompasses the principles of offensive, mass, maneuver, and surprise. Employing OMFTS, naval forces dominate the battlespace of littoral areas to mass forces rapidly and generate high intensity, precise offensive might for power projection at a time and location of their choosing. This means having the required mobility, flexibility, and technology to mass strength against weakness.<sup>18</sup>**

**Force Sustainment is another supporting function that is essential to the success of any major operation or campaign. Naval forces can operate in a littoral area indefinitely based upon their sea based logistics systems. In a major regional contingency, their forward logistics, prepositioning and strategic sealift will be critical to sustaining a joint force on a foreign shore. Doctrine must continue to emphasize and refine this capability.**

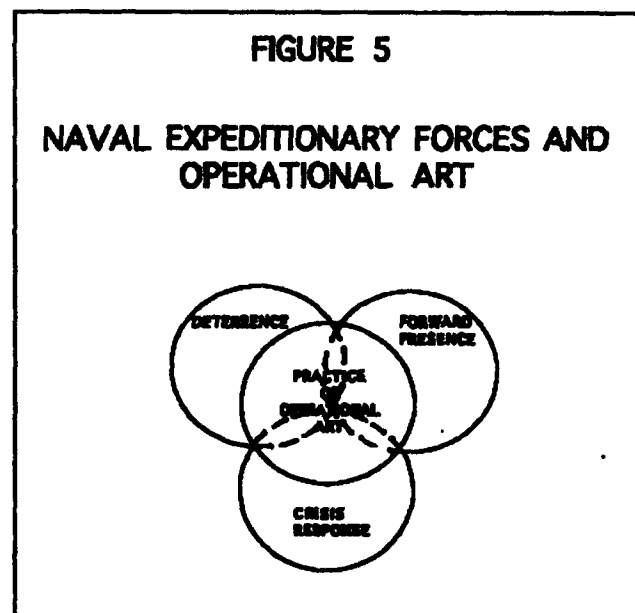
## CHAPTER V

### THE PRACTICE

The Armed Forces of the United States are organized, trained, equipped, deployed and employed in support of the NMS. CINCs develop peacetime (deterrence and forward presence) and wartime (crisis response and reconstitution) campaign plans that encompass theater strategic and operational objectives that achieve the conditions necessary to support the four pillars of the NMS. Effective operational art embodies a service's ability to provide a CINC the type of forces that allow him to successfully execute his campaign plans.

In the practice of naval operational art, naval expeditionary forces are well suited to support a CINC's campaign plans in meeting the requirements of three of the four pillars: deterrence, forward presence, and crisis response. They are particularly important in this regard, because properly tailored, they can substantially assist a CINC or JFC in achieving a seamless transition from deterrence and forward presence to crisis response and back again. (See Figure 5.)

Naval expeditionary forces are the way the Navy and Marine Corps organize, train, deploy, and when required employ, their forces. These forces are centered on carrier battle



**groups and amphibious ready groups with embarked Marine Air-Ground Task Forces. Together they provide the NCA and CINCs a robust capability to conduct expeditionary operations, achieve initial and sustained battlespace dominance and, when required, seamless power projection from the sea.<sup>19</sup>**

**Expeditionary means service overseas, at sea or ashore. The key operational characteristics of these forces are: task organized, forward deployed, mobile, sustainable, and interoperable. Task organization provides the flexibility to organize the mix of forces that best supports the CINC's operations and campaign plans. Forward deployment provides a CINC a force on scene rather than a force in being in CONUS and mobility ensures their continued viability as presence or crisis requirements shift. Sustainability allows the force to stay the course until the CINC's objectives are achieved. And, finally, interoperability means that they can work unilaterally or as part of joint or combined force.**

**In supporting deterrence, the Naval Service provides the NCA both a nuclear and conventional deterrence capability. Fleet ballistic missile submarines are an essential component of the Nation's nuclear deterrent triad. In those situations where nuclear deterrence is inappropriate and conventional deterrence is called for, forward deployed naval forces or their movement to a crisis area are two strong deterrent signals that can be sent.<sup>20</sup>**

**For the last half of this century, forward presence of US forces in regions vital to US national interests have been a key element in averting crises and preventing war.<sup>21</sup> Forward presence will continue to be essential in this regard and with the continued**

draw down of permanently based forces overseas, naval expeditionary forces will become even more critical in supporting the forward presence pillar of the NMS. Naval expeditionary forces provide the NCA and Regional CINCs with the forces necessary to fulfill a large portion of their forward presence requirements in the littoral areas of the world. Their inherent mobility allows a CINC to position them where they can best support his intended objectives.

The capability to respond to crises is another key element of the NMS. The objective of forward presence, in part, is to prevent or contain crises. When this fails, naval expeditionary forces provide a CINC a force that links his forward presence and crisis response capabilities. They can be a force that stabilizes the crisis, allows for the discrete application of military power or acts as an enabling force for the introduction of the CINC's joint/combined force.

Naval expeditionary forces, carrier battle groups and amphibious forces, are continuously forward deployed in the Mediterranean, Pacific, and Persian Gulf and routinely deploy to other regions as required. Additionally, they have been the capability selected by the NCA and CINCs in 86% of the over 83 crises that have occurred since 1977.<sup>22</sup> Recent examples include Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Operations Provide Comfort and Southern Watch, and Operation Restore Hope. The success of the Naval Service in each of these operations are indicative of the employment of effective naval operational art.

While they preceded its release, Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm are the best examples of the scope and range of naval capabilities envisioned in the Naval

Service's current vision "...From the Sea". Additionally they provide the best recent examples of the practice of naval operational art.

The Persian Gulf War was conducted as a single campaign that included both Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and consisted of three phases. Phase one was the defense of the Arabian Peninsula and included the deployment and build-up of forces and sustainability. Phase two was the destruction of Iraqi warfighting capability and ejection of Iraqi forces from Kuwait which was primarily the offensive portion of the campaign. And, phase three was the liberation and reconstruction of Kuwait which encompassed both ensuring the cease fire and redeployment of the majority of forces.<sup>23</sup>

During the defensive oriented Desert Shield phase of the campaign, there were four operational objectives:

- ◆ Develop a defensive capability in the Gulf region to deter Saddam Hussein from further attacks;
- ◆ Defend Saudi Arabia effectively if deterrence failed;
- ◆ Build a military Coalition and integrate Coalition forces into operational plans; and finally,
- ◆ Enforce the economic sanctions prescribed in UNSC Resolution 661 and 665.<sup>24</sup>

Naval expeditionary forces, both forward deployed and CONUS based, were some of the first combat capable and sustainable forces in theater, both afloat and ashore. It was naval forces that ensured the sea lines of communications remained open allowing the build up of forces and required sustainment by the Military Sealift Command. Naval forces provided operational protection and reconnaissance both ashore and to the seaward flanks. Enforcement of UNSC Resolution 661 and 665 was principally



executed via maritime interdiction operations (MIO) which were a naval mission throughout the Persian Gulf War campaign. And, as the requirement for the offensive phases of the campaign became apparent, the naval components conducted joint integrated planning with the CINC's staff, other components, and Coalition partners for the conduct of Desert Storm.

During the offensive oriented Desert Storm phases, there were six operational objectives that CINCCENT sought to accomplish:

- ◆ Attack Iraqi political-military leadership and C2;
- ◆ Gain and maintain air superiority;
- ◆ Sever Iraqi supply lines;
- ◆ Destroy known nuclear, biological and chemical production, storage, and delivery capabilities;
- ◆ Destroy Republican Guard forces in the KTO; and,
- ◆ Liberate Kuwait City.<sup>25</sup>

Again, naval expeditionary forces supported, to one degree or another, achievement of all six stated objectives. They provided operational fires/strike operations with both sea based and land based Navy and Marine Corps air and with surface and submarine TLAM cruise missile attacks. They executed critical supporting missions such as CSAR and continued operational protection of the theater's eastern and western flanks. Naval expeditionary forces supported the CINC's very successful operational deception goals with the amphibious forces afloat and I Marine Expeditionary Force's (MEF) Task Force Troy ashore. When the ground portion of Desert Storm commenced, the Navy's six carriers continued to conduct supporting strike

operations, surface combatants provided supporting fires to Coalition forces, amphibious forces afloat reinforced I MEF forces ashore, and finally, the Marines and sailors of I MEF successfully executed the supporting attack that both liberated Kuwait City and enabled the main army force to engage Republican Guard forces.

The success of the Persian Gulf War campaign was the result of many diverse factors that came together at the right time and place to achieve the required decisive results. What pulled these multiple factors together and directed them towards the achievement of common theater strategic and operational objectives was the employment of operational art. The challenge, however, was that many of the naval leaders who had critical planning and executing responsibilities, learned the practice of naval operational art the hard way, by trial and error during the initial phase of the war.

While Desert Shield and Desert Storm are the best recent examples of the practice of naval operational art, operations other than war, such as Provide Comfort, Southern Watch, and Restore Hope are also instructive. They provide excellent examples of how naval expeditionary forces support a CINC's peacetime operations and campaign plans in terms of transitioning from forward presence to crisis response by providing an immediate response and enabling capability.

Operation Provide Comfort was undertaken to provide security and humanitarian support to Kurdish refugees in northern Iraq in 1991. The operation was spearheaded by a forward deployed Amphibious Ready Group with an embarked Marine Expeditionary Unit (SOC). This force was able to act as the initial response and enabling capability for the joint/combined force that was required. Similarly, Operation

Southern Watch was instituted in southern Iraq to assist in the security of the Shia and to enforce the provisions of the cease fire. This operation has been supported, since the end of the Persian Gulf War, by rotating forward deployed carrier battle groups and TLAM capable surface ships and submarines.

For Operation Restore Hope, the CINC's initial forces on scene were naval expeditionary forces in the form of a carrier battle group and an amphibious ready group with a special purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force embarked. They provided the initial crisis response, then acted as an enabling force for the introduction of the joint and combined forces and then operated as part of joint task force both afloat and ashore. Additionally, the carrier battle group, when no longer needed to support Operation Restore Hope, proceeded to the Persian Gulf region where it participated in strike operations as part of Operation Southern Watch.

The foundation of operational art in the Naval Service is certainly validated by past operational practice. But the past must be a guide for focusing on the future.

## **CHAPTER VI**

### **THE NAVAL SERVICE AND OPERATIONAL ART - QUO VADIS?**

The strategic and operational environment of the future will continue to be dynamic and uncertain. The Naval Service will be called upon to respond, as part of joint forces, to brushfire crises around the world while remaining prepared to meet major regional contingencies requirements. Further, these challenges will have to be met in an environment of declining resources.

The approach that the Naval Service takes is one that must make the best utilization of its current capital investment. The equipment that was brought on line to meet the challenges of the "Maritime Strategy" must now see the Naval Service through its current vision, "...From the Sea", and quite possibly through its next vision as well. The carrier "Midway" was designed as a World War II fast fleet carrier, but it provided effective service throughout the continuum of Naval Service visions. What allowed the "Midway" to remain viable was not a resource approach to changing security requirements, but rather an operational art approach.

"...From the Sea" provides the new strategic direction for the Naval Service. It clearly articulates that the services's direction can safely be shifted from a focus on blue water operations to a more regional one. To translate the current vision into effective doctrine and practice, the Naval Service needs to develop a consensus. This does not mean that there should not be open and continued debate. To the contrary, open and frank debates and writings, regarding the current vision, will be essential to reaching an ultimate consensus.

Further, "...From the Sea" is not the Naval Service's final vision. It is only the current vision. It must be continuously revalidated in terms of the threat and the operational capabilities that will be needed to support the CINCs' peacetime and wartime operations and campaign plans. Additionally, continued professional discussion will lay the groundwork and help set the direction for the Naval Service's next vision.

Doctrine provides the common basis for action not only in a service, but also among the services. It is through this common basis for action that the military forces of the United States can achieve the joint synergy that will be critical to success on the modern battlefield. Naval doctrine must be joint and describe how naval forces will accomplish their missions and execute their roles as part of a CINC's joint military team.

With the establishment of the Naval Doctrine Command, a significant amount of effort and resources are being dedicated to produce naval warfare doctrine which reflects the Naval Service's vision and shapes its operational practice. It is essential, however, that the operating forces, the Fleets and Fleet Marine Forces, are actively and continuously involved in this process. It is the sailors and Marines that must ensure that what is written is practiced and what is practiced is written.

Naval doctrine is not dogma. It is a living and dynamic concept. It needs to be taught, understood, discussed and debated. In part, this is the intent of Naval Doctrine Publication 1. One of its main objectives is to stimulate discussion, promote further study, and instill in readers a feeling of ownership as contributing members of a coordinated Navy/Marine Corps team.<sup>26</sup>

Naval forces must continue to focus on how they can best support the NCA and the regional CINCs in achieving the strategic and operational objectives of their peacetime and wartime operations plans. Control of the sea remains fundamental to accomplishing this. The three pillars of the NMS that the Naval Service will continue to be particularly well suited to support, and accordingly should focus on, are deterrence, forward presence, and crisis response.

The leverage that naval expeditionary forces must continue to provide is an operational capability that combines agility and power projection with sustainability. This will require adaptability and flexibility in the way future naval forces are deployed and employed, and an approach that emphasizes solutions based on the employment of operational art vice ones that seek additional resources.

The interoperability of naval forces in both the joint and combined arenas will also be essential. In supporting future national security challenges, the Naval Service will almost certainly be one of several contributors and not a sole provider. Accordingly, naval forces must continue to enhance their joint character and capability. Ideally, the staffs of forward deploying naval expeditionary forces should seek to have multi-service representation on them. And, priority should be given to joint/combined training opportunities.

## **CHAPTER VII**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

To be successful, as part of a joint team on the modern and complex battlefield, requires a service to be able to effectively employ operational art. Each service attempts to establish a foundation for their approach to operational art that will maximize their warfighting capabilities and contributions. What forms the foundation of the Naval Service's approach to operational art is its vision, doctrine and practice.

Vision provides the direction for determining the capabilities that the Naval Service must maintain or acquire to support the enduring security objectives of the NCA and the regional operations and campaign plans of the CINCs. Doctrine ensures that there is a common basis for action both within the Naval Service and among the services. Current doctrine, that reflects both the Naval Service's vision and practice, is an essential element for achieving synergy in future operations. The practice of naval warfare must support both joint and combined operations. The practice of achieving decisive force requires combining the capabilities of all services and allies towards the achievement of common strategic and operational objectives.

The Naval Doctrine Command should ensure the current validity of written doctrine. Doctrinal publications must accurately reflect the operational practices of the Fleet and Fleet Marine Force. Despite the existence of a feedback procedure, doctrinal publications almost always begin their spiral towards obsolescence with their release. What is needed is a feedback and dissemination system that allows formal doctrine to change as tactical techniques and procedures change in the operating forces.

The success of the Persian Gulf War validates a warfighting approach that embraces the concept of operational art. In the future, the effective employment of operational art will also be pivotal to the US military's success in any major operation or campaign. While naval leaders were able to develop their skills in employing operational art during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, in the next war, they need to arrive as masters rather than students of operational art.

The Naval Service needs to be more aggressive and comprehensive in exposing and teaching operational art to its leadership. Inculcating naval leaders should be a multifaceted approach. All courses of professional military education should incorporate it, but technical courses such as staff planning courses, targeting courses, etc., should also include elements of operational art where appropriate. Additionally, all Navy and Marine Corps exercises should reflect tactical actions undertaken to achieve or contribute to specific operational objectives rather than being ventured simply to facilitate tactical training.

The future relevance of the Naval Service will be determined by how effective it remains in contributing to the national security in an environment of diminished resources and an uncertain future. Therefore, naval leaders will have to fight smarter with less. To accomplish that, those leaders must become masters of operational art. Fundamental to being able to master operational art, is having a sound knowledge and understanding of its foundation.



## ENDNOTES

1. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0 (Washington: 1993), p.

2. Milan N. Vego, Fundamentals of Operational Art, (Initial Draft), U.S. Naval War College (Newport, RI: 1994), p. 43. Prof. Vego describes operational art as having two components: theory and practice. The paradigm depicted in Figure 1 describes the foundation of operational art as: vision, doctrine and practice. The intended purpose of Figure 1 is to provide a framework for analyzing operational art in the Naval Service and not to further define Prof. Vego's description of operational art. However, in that the term "theory" fits the concepts of "vision" and "doctrine", the paradigm in Figure 1 supports Prof. Vego's description of operational art.

3. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States (Washington: 1992), p. 5.

4. U.S. Dept. of State and U.S. Dept. of Defense, Congressional Presentation for Promoting Peace (Washington: FY 1995), p. 14.

5. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States, p. 6.

6. Peter Davies, ed., The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc.), p. 774.

8. Frank B. Kelso, II and Carl E. Mundy, Jr., "The naval Service is Joint," USNI Proceedings, may 1993, pp. 45-46.

8. U.S. Navy Dept., "...From the Sea." Preparing the Naval Service for the 21st Century (Washington: 1992), p. 1.

9. Ibid., p. 2.

10. Ibid., p. 5.

11. Vego, p. 43.

12. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, DOD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Joint Pub 1-02 (Washington: 1989), p. 118.

13. Dudley W. Knox, "The Role of Doctrine in Naval Warfare," USNI Proceedings, March-April 1915, pp. 49-50.

14. The common Defense

15. "Department of the Navy 1994 Posture Statement," Marine Corps Gazette, April 1994, p. 16.

16. As described in NPD-1, these five additional doctrinal publications will include: Naval Intelligence (NDP-2), Naval Operations (NDP-3), Naval Logistics (NDP-4), Naval Planning (NDP-5), and Naval Command and Control (NDP-6).

17. U.S. Navy Dept., "...From the Sea," Preparing the Naval Service for the 21st Century, p. 5.

18. Ibid., p. 6.

19. "Dept. of the Navy 1994 Posture Statement," p. 17.

20. U.S. Navy Dept., Naval Warfare, NDP 1 (Washington: 1994), p. 17.

21. U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States, p. 7.

22. Thomas P. Barnett and Linda D. Lancaster, Answering the 911 Call: U.S. Military and Naval Response Activity, 1977-1991, Center for Naval Analysis (Alexandria, VA: August 1992), p. 7.

23. Douglas W. Craft, An Operational Analysis of the Persian Gulf War, Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. War College (Carlisle Barracks, PA: 1992), p. 13.

24. U.S. Dept. of Defense, Conduct of the Persian Gulf War, Final Report to Congress (Washington: 1992), p. 40.

25. Ibid., p. 98.

26. Ibid., p. 71.

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